

SARA MARTIN  
Owner, Anchor Massage Therapy

# body language

## HOLISTIC APPROACH DECIPHERS MESSAGES YOUR ACHES AND PAINS ARE SENDING

**Becoming your best self is an ongoing process, but with a team of knowledgeable professionals to help guide the way, getting on the right path can start with the proverbial single step at Anchor Massage Therapy.**

The Anchor team takes a holistic approach to wellness, reflecting owner and Registered Massage Therapist Sara Martin's philosophy and life experience.

Rehabilitation, prevention, exercise, nutrition and healthy lifestyle are all part of the equation — along with an understanding that the stress of modern life can literally be a pain in the neck. Social media, 24/7 email access and non-stop distractions overload our nervous systems, taking a physical, psychic and spiritual toll.

"People don't even realize they're in fight or flight all the time because that's their natural resting state. We're not running away from dinosaurs, we're running away from stress," Martin says.

Fortunately, more of us are realizing that there's a mind-body connection, and that we have to take time for self-care and to do preventative work.

Becoming a Registered Massage Therapist (RMT) was a natural career progression for Martin, whose background includes playing high-level sports and working in a high-stress career in the non-profit sector.

While there's a trend toward multi-disciplinary clinics that house a collection of physical therapies under one roof — think athletic therapists, physiotherapists and chiropractors — her focus is more all-encompassing. Along with a team of eight RMTs who provide everything from pre-natal massage to therapy for sports- or job-related injuries and conditions associated with stress, Anchor also offers counselling services. And Martin envisions a time when services might be expanded even further, to include nutrition and diet counselling, naturopathy, homeopathy or osteopathy.

Located on Waterfront Drive in the East Exchange District, the non-hierarchical, referral-based clinic is designed to be a welcoming space. Martin set out to create an atmosphere where patients feel safe to explore the root causes of their physical discomforts.

**Anchor Massage Therapy is open seven days a week at 102- 270 Waterfront Drive. Call 204-415-3202, email [info@anchormassage.ca](mailto:info@anchormassage.ca) or book an appointment online at [www.anchormassage.ca](http://www.anchormassage.ca).**



PHOTO BY DARCY FINLEY

She believes our thoughts and actions can be read as predictive texts.

"The brain will always go to what's habitual, what's easiest. We're all stuck in these involuntary, habitual either movement patterns or thinking patterns," she explains.

These patterns can affect our physical states, manifesting as tension or chronic pain. Understanding each patient's unique set of circumstances and fostering an open dialogue is an important element in identifying causes and providing care.

Education is another key component. Along with a full explanation of their treatment plan, Martin provides printouts that patients can take home as a visual reminder of the correct way to perform exercises and stretches.

She believes that knowledge empowers patients to seek and receive a higher quality of health care, even if that means her team sometimes refers them to a trusted roster of therapists and specialists in other modalities.

"The more resources you have for your clients the better," she says. "I really make sure that my patients are using all the professionals that are there for them. You have to use the whole health-care system." ■